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FOURTH COMMITTEE
3rd meeting
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at 3 p.m.
New York

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 3rd MEETING

Chairman: Mr. MELENDEZ-BARAHONA (El Salvador)

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The meeting was called to order at 3.25 p.m.

EXPRESSION OF SYMPATHY IN CONNECTION WITH THE RECENT EARTHQUAKE IN EGYPT

1. The CHAIRMAN, on behalf of all the members of the Committee, expressed sympathy to the Government of Egypt in connection with the recent earthquake in that country.

2. Mr. ELZIMAITY (Egypt) thanked the Chairman for the expression of sympathy.

ELECTION OF OFFICERS (continued)

3. Mr. KPOTOGBEY (Togo) nominated Mr. Mwabulukutu (United Republic of Tanzania) for the office of Vice-Chairman.

4. Mr. Mwabulukutu (United Republic of Tanzania) was elected Vice-Chairman by acclamation.

5. Mr. KEMBER (New Zealand) nominated Mr. Al-Baker (Qatar) for the office of Rapporteur.

6. Mr. Al-Baker (Qatar) was elected Rapporteur by acclamation.

REQUESTS FOR HEARINGS (A/C.4/47/2 and Add.1-3; A/C.4/47/3-7)

7. The CHAIRMAN informed the Committee that he had received a communication containing a request for a hearing relating to the United States Virgin Islands, under item 18. He suggested that the communication should be circulated as a Committee document* for consideration at a subsequent meeting.

8. It was so decided.

9. The CHAIRMAN drew attention to nine communications containing requests for hearings concerning item 18, relating to Western Sahara (A/C.4/47/2 and Add.1-3), Guam (A/C.4/47/6) and New Caledonia (A/C.4/47/7); item 38, relating to the Falkland Islands (Malvinas) (A/C.4/47/4); item 100 (A/C.4/47/3); and item 99 (A/C.4/47/5). He took it that the Committee wished to grant those requests.

10. It was so decided.

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* Subsequently circulated as document A/C.4/47/8.

AGENDA ITEM 18: IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DECLARATION ON THE GRANTING OF INDEPENDENCE TO COLONIAL COUNTRIES AND PEOPLES (Territories not covered under other agenda items) (A/47/23 (Part V, chap. IX, and Part VI, chap. X), A/47/225, 391 and 506; A/AC.109/1097-1106, 1108-1113, 1116-1120 and 1123-1125; S/23362, S/24040 and S/24464)

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AGENDA ITEM 100: IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DECLARATION ON THE GRANTING OF INDEPENDENCE TO COLONIAL COUNTRIES AND PEOPLES BY THE SPECIALIZED AGENCIES AND THE INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTIONS ASSOCIATED WITH THE UNITED NATIONS (continued) (A/47/23 (Part IV, chap. VII), A/47/281 and Add.1; A/AC.109/L.1785; E/1992/85)

AGENDA ITEM 12: REPORT OF THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL (continued) (A/47/3 (chaps. I and V (sect. B)))

AGENDA ITEM 101: OFFERS BY MEMBER STATES OF STUDY AND TRAINING FACILITIES FOR INHABITANTS OF NON-SELF-GOVERNING TERRITORIES (continued) (A/47/486)

11. Mr. LOHIA (Papua New Guinea), speaking as Chairman of the Special Committee on decolonization, said that the composition of the membership of the United Nations was a clear testimony to the Special Committee's achievement: 60 colonial Territories representing more than 80 million people had joined the Organization.

12. The Special Committee had kept its approach under constant review in order to adjust to changing circumstances and to improve its efficiency. That continuing review had gained renewed impetus since 1990 owing to the positive developments that had occurred in international relations since the end of the cold war.

13. In response to delegations which had felt that the Special Committee was not paying enough attention to the reality of the situation in the remaining 18 Non-Self-Governing Territories, the majority of which were small island Territories, the Special Committee had decided to take all necessary measures to focus its attention on the special needs of those Territories by using all available sources of information, the most authoritative being the views of the Territorial Governments and peoples concerned. The Special Committee had systematically encouraged the representatives of those Territories to participate in its work at Headquarters, as well as in the three regional seminars it had organized since 1990. It was in the process of organizing the

(Mr. Lohia, Papua New Guinea)

Pacific regional seminar on decolonization for 1993 in Papua New Guinea, and in early 1992 had held a regional seminar in Grenada in which many representatives and non-governmental organizations from Non-Self-Governing Territories in the Caribbean had participated.

14. Convinced that decolonization could not be concluded without the full participation and cooperation of the administering Powers, the Special Committee had spared no effort to improve its relations with them. It must be noted, however, that, despite the Committee's continued efforts, results had not lived up to expectations. The Special Committee would continue its endeavours in that regard.

15. The Committee, with the assistance of the open-ended working group established in 1991, had taken steps, beginning at the previous session, to eliminate duplication, as well as to ensure the efficient and effective use of the Committee's limited resources; they included the merger of its two subcommittees and the consolidation into one single resolution of the individual resolutions on 10 of the 18 Territories.

16. Furthermore, to ease tension and to restore its dedication and constructive deliberations, the Special Committee, since 1990, had systematically reviewed the language of its resolutions and made a number of changes. No member country was unnecessarily singled out for criticism in the Special Committee's recommendations. Other adjustments had also been made, particularly with regard to the Committee's recommendations on activities of foreign economic and other interests and military installations in Non-Self-Governing Territories.

17. The Special Committee's reference to apartheid in its resolutions, which had been a matter of concern to some members in the Fourth Committee for the past two years, had been discussed at length. Finally, the Special Committee had decided not to eliminate reference to apartheid from its recommendations, since that might give the mistaken impression that the United Nations considered that apartheid had already been eradicated. The Committee had taken note with satisfaction of some positive changes that had occurred in South Africa in the past two years and accordingly had decided to continue to follow the situation closely with a view to preparing appropriate conclusions and recommendations to the General Assembly.

18. Another issue of concern had been the Special Committee's practice of reviewing every year the situation in the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands. A number of delegations had expressed the view that, as a strategic Territory, the appropriate place for its consideration was the Trusteeship Council and the Security Council. The Committee had studied carefully those views. In order to foster a climate conducive to a constructive outcome of the efforts of the people and Government of Palau and the Administering Authority regarding the future political status of that Territory, the Special Committee had decided to defer consideration of the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands until 1993.

(Mr. Lohia, Papua New Guinea)

19. Similarly, the Special Committee, on the recommendation of its open-ended working group, had deferred to 1993 consideration of its decision of 15 August 1991 concerning Puerto Rico.

20. That was the background to the Special Committee's recommendations which had now been submitted to the Fourth Committee for its consideration. He assured members of his full cooperation with the Fourth Committee as it began its deliberations.

21. The CHAIRMAN said that, pursuant to General Assembly resolution 46/70 on the cooperation of specialized agencies and the international institutions associated with the United Nations, the Committee would now hear statements by the representatives of FAO and UNESCO.

22. Mr. SYROGIANIS CAMARA (Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations) said that the dismantling of apartheid in South Africa would continue to receive the full support of FAO. As it had already done in Namibia, FAO would soon begin technical assistance activities in South Africa. The experience gained through the technical assistance provided to the African National Congress (ANC) and the Pan Africanist Congress of Azania (PAC) would be useful in efforts to develop self-reliance in agricultural production and management skills.

23. As stated in document A/47/281, FAO was executing four technical assistance projects in some countries in the South Pacific still under colonial rule. In the small Territories of the Caribbean, FAO was cooperating with UNDP and the Caribbean Community to develop activities pertaining to management of the exclusive economic zone and to agriculture. As indicated in document A/47/281, FAO was also involved in reviewing and commenting on the country programmes of those Territories.

24. The FAO Conference in November 1991 had made history by admitting a non-independent country, Puerto Rico, as an associate member of FAO. Thus, Puerto Rico now participated in conferences and meetings organized by FAO and benefited from its assistance.

25. Mr. KEMBER (New Zealand) said that his delegation, as one of the sponsors of the resolution inviting the specialized agencies to participate in the work of the Committee, was delighted with the presence of the representatives of FAO and other specialized agencies. He wondered whether the four FAO technical assistance projects in the South Pacific included the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands.

26. Mr. SYROGIANIS CAMARA (Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations) said that the projects involved not only Palau but also independent Pacific nations; for instance, one project in which Tokelau was involved also covered Tonga and Western Samoa.

27. Mrs. DUKULY-TOLBERT (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization) said that pursuant to General Assembly resolution 46/70 UNESCO had continued its programmes of assistance to Anguilla, the British Virgin Islands, the Cayman Islands, Montserrat and the Turks and Caicos Islands, relating, inter alia, to the development of teaching materials, provision of scholarships, restoration of historical sites, upgrading of information facilities, the eradication of illiteracy, and technical and vocational education. In respect of Anguilla, UNESCO, jointly with the British Development Division, had been supporting the development of teaching materials.

28. With respect to liberation movements, UNESCO had, following past practice, provided an international fellowship in the United Kingdom to a candidate put forward by the African National Congress (ANC). Educational equipment costing $18,000 had been purchased by the education centres of ANC and PAC (Pan Africanist Congress of Azania). UNESCO had also organized a seminar on the future of ANC's education centres. Representatives of ANC and PAC had been enabled to attend the twenty-sixth session of the UNESCO General Conference held in October/November 1991.

29. Although the ANC education centres had been closed, UNESCO would continue to execute the five educational projects funded by UNDP to provide primary to university training for candidates put forward by ANC and PAC, with an overall cost of about $4 million.

30. Certain other educational activities were also being carried out in Africa by UNESCO, notably assistance to the University of Namibia and the UNITWIN university network for southern Africa, which promoted cooperation between Zimbabwe, Mozambique, Namibia and, in the future, South Africa. UNESCO would continue to assist those countries despite the diminution of its resources due to the withdrawal of two major contributors.

31. Mr. YAQUBI (Afghanistan) said that through the years, the Special Committee on decolonization had steadfastly pursued the cause of self-determination, in accordance with its mandate. At a time of relaxation of international tensions and increasing political and economic integration, it was important not to allow the Non-Self-Governing Territories to be relegated to a secondary plane. His delegation firmly believed that there were opportunities to solve the global problems for the benefit of the people without any discrimination.

32. On the Question of East Timor, his delegation fully supported the Secretary-General's efforts and hoped the concerned parties would fully cooperate with them. With regard to Western Sahara, it supported the ongoing efforts of the Secretary-General and the current Chairman of the Organization of African Unity (OAU) towards the implementation of the settlement plan calling for a referendum to be organized and conducted by the United Nations in cooperation with OAU.

(Mr. Yaqubi, Afghanistan)

33. The United Nations should look forward to the day when its work in the field of decolonization was no longer necessary. Until that day, administering Powers should cooperate with the Fourth Committee and the relevant United Nations agencies.

AGENDA ITEM 18: IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DECLARATION ON THE GRANTING OF INDEPENDENCE TO COLONIAL COUNTRIES AND PEOPLES (Territories not covered under other agenda items) (continued)

Question of Guam (A/47/23 (Part VI))

Hearing of representatives of Non-Self-Governing Territories

34. At the invitation of the Chairman, Mr. Guerrero (representing the Governor of Guam) took a place at the table.

35. Mr. GUERRERO, speaking on behalf of the Governor of Guam, noted that the Government of Guam was appearing before the Committee for the first time in order to share its views and make known the aspirations of the Guamanian people.

36. In 1987, the people of Guam had endorsed by plebiscite a draft Commonwealth Act, which was subsequently transmitted to the administering Power. The proposal provided for Guam and the administering Power to establish an interim commonwealth arrangement whereby Guam would assume full internal self-government, and, in conformity with General Assembly resolutions 1514 (XV) and 1541 (XV), made provision for the exercise of self-determination by the indigenous Chamorro people of Guam. The Commonwealth Act was the first plan for the decolonization of the island in its history.

37. Since 1988, the Guam Commission on Self-Determination had engaged the administering Power in discussions about the proposal for interim self-government. It had made some progress, but had also met with intransigence on most substantive matters. The process would continue, as Guam's quest for commonwealth status was to be taken up by the United States Congress some time in 1993.

38. His Government had been disappointed, meanwhile, that recent General Assembly resolutions on the question of Guam had not thoroughly reflected internationally established principles for decolonization. Although General Assembly resolution 43/42 had urged the administering Power "to give full recognition to the status and rights of the Chamorro people as provided for in the draft Commonwealth Act", by 1991 all reference to Guam's indigenous people, and to the Commonwealth Act, had disappeared from the resolution on the question of Guam. Worse, that year's resolution had contained language, in paragraph 1, that appeared to make Guam's right to self-determination a conditional one. It was his Government's firm belief that a people's right to self-determination was an inherent one, and that conditions should never be placed on that internationally accepted principle.

(Mr. Guerrero)

39. The resolution adopted by the Special Committee on decolonization on 28 July had been a marked improvement over the 1991 resolution. It had appropriately recognized the existence of the indigenous Chamorro people and due consideration had been given to his Government's discussions with the administering Power on Guam's political status and right to self-determination. The Government of Guam looked forward to further refinements in the future.

40. Mr. Guerrero withdrew.

Hearing of petitioners (A/C.4/47/6)

41. At the invitation of the Chairman, Ms. Souder (Organization of People for Indigenous Rights) took a place at the petitioners' table.

42. Ms. SOUDER (Organization of People for Indigenous Rights) said that her organization was deeply concerned with the weakening of the resolution on Guam over the past few years, and with the reworking of the language of the 1992 draft resolution at the insistence of the administering Power. She urged the Committee to reinstate the language of resolution 43/42, in which the General Assembly explicitly recognized the right of the Chamorros to self-determination and urged the administering Power to give full recognition to the status and rights of the Chamorro people as provided for in the draft Commonwealth Act.

43. It was a tragic irony that Guam remained a colony near the end of the twentieth century. Its people had approved a process of decolonization only to find the administering Power actively engaged in attempting to remove recognition of that process. By its resolution 43/42 the General Assembly had called on the administering Power to recognize the right of the Chamorro people to self-determination under the terms of the Commonwealth Act. By 1989, however, the resolution on Guam (resolution 44/98) had dropped reference to self-determination in accordance with that Act, and in the latest draft resolution in document A/47/23 (Part VI) there was no reference to the Chamorro people, nor even to the plan calling for Guam's decolonization that had been transmitted to the administering Power.

44. It seemed incumbent on the Committee to recognize that plan, the only one in Guam's 350-year history as a colony to call for decolonization through an act of Chamorro self-determination. Moreover, other erosions of the language of the resolution demanded review. Language introduced in 1991 before the Fourth Committee by the administering Power would make Guam's right to self-determination contingent upon the military interests of that Power. The initial wording of the resolution (46/68 B VI, para. 1) in its draft form had called upon the administering Power "to ensure that the presence of military bases and installations in the Territory would not constitute an obstacle to the implementation of the Declaration ... nor hinder the population of the Territory from exercising its right to self-determination". At the request of

(Ms. Souder)

the administering Power the word "would" had been replaced by "should", thereby debasing the whole process of self-determination. As that wording was again before the Committee, it must address the matter; the support expressed by the Government of Guam and the Organization of People for Indigenous Rights before the Committee had been based on the original wording. The use of the word "should" to modify the right of self-determination made a mockery of the very principles of the Declaration, to which nearly half of the General Assembly owed their existence as nation States.

45. An important issue not raised in the resolution needed to be addressed: the continued immigration of settlers to Guam. The 1980 Plan of Action had made abundantly clear a moral obligation that had previously always been understood, namely that administering Powers should not encourage immigration into Territories, and yet the most recent census figures showed that by 1990, over half of Guam's population were not Guamanian-born, and nearly a third had come to Guam after 1985. The administering Power was in fact overseeing a process of assimilation of the Chamorro people in their homeland. The people of Guam had, through the Commonwealth Act, expressed their wish that immigration should be halted. Every day that United States immigration policies continued to apply to Guam, the role of the Chamorro people in their homeland was being reduced. That flagrant violation of accepted standards of responsibility must be addressed, forcefully, by the United Nations. Otherwise, the Organization would be faced with a much more difficult proposition in the future, as the Chamorro people would ultimately react in a negative way to demographic changes that took from them control of their patrimony. The administering Power's actions made a mockery of the Declaration.

46. The Committee was not likely, she conceded, to mandate United States immigration policy for Guam, but it could state categorically that the Chamorros had the unconditional right to self-determination without interference from non-Chamorros, whatever their citizenship, and she urged it to do so, using the language of the 1988 resolution.

47. Ms. Souder withdrew.

AGENDA ITEM 99: ACTIVITIES OF THOSE FOREIGN ECONOMIC AND OTHER INTERESTS WHICH IMPEDE THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DECLARATION ON THE GRANTING OF INDEPENDENCE TO COLONIAL COUNTRIES AND PEOPLES IN TERRITORIES UNDER COLONIAL DOMINATION AND EFFORTS TO ELIMINATE COLONIALISM, APARTHEID AND RACIAL DISCRIMINATION IN SOUTHERN AFRICA (continued)

Hearing of petitioners (A/C.4/47/5)

48. At the invitation of the Chairman, Mr. González-González took a place at the petitioners' table.

49. Mr. GONZALEZ-GONZALEZ, speaking in a personal capacity, said that only those divorced from the social and economic realities in colonial Territories could put forward the capitalist argument that the activities of transnational corporations were not always an obstacle to the implementation of the Declaration. The primary aim of the rich was always to become richer and more powerful, and the presence of foreign economic interests in the enslaved Territories without the consent of the people always spelt exploitation and interference in local politics, culture and life.

50. Similarly, military bases in the colonial Territories existed to protect the masters, not the local people: there could be no other explanation for the saturation with military bases by the United States of its colonial Territories like Puerto Rico and Guam, or, mutatis mutandis, for the similar situation regarding the military installations of the United Kingdom and France.

51. Cynically, the imperialist masters used a Territory's schools and media to mold the local people's way of thinking so as to corrupt their culture, stamp out their instincts for freedom and make them submissive. The friends of the imperialists in the United Nations were accomplices in such ignominy, either by their applause or by their silence; and that complicity was one of the main obstacles to the implementation of the Declaration.

52. The aim being pursued by the United States, with its stranglehold on the Security Council and on the purse-strings of the United Nations, was to neutralize the Declaration and to have the Fourth Committee disbanded or merged with some other Committee. In a recent document submitted by the United States to the Special Committee on decolonization, for example, any mention of General Assembly resolution 1514 (XV) was significantly absent, as was any reference to the handing over of power to dependent peoples. The United States argued instead that the remaining Territories still on the agenda of the Special Committee should be considered under Chapter XI of the Charter - a text which, if carefully read, could be seen to propound only cosmetic changes within colonies, without concerning itself with self-determination or with true decolonization and release from slavery.

53. On the five hundredth anniversary of the discovery of the New World, he wished to note that, of the 19 Hispano-American nations founded by Spain 500 years earlier, only Puerto Rico remained in bondage.

54. Mr. González-González withdrew.

The meeting rose at 5.05 p.m.